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Note for Moog, Karen

From: Merlo, Ellen  
Date: Sun, Mar 7, 1993 5:44 PM  
Subject: FW: FET  
To: Moog, Karen

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From: Pressl, Lance on Sun, Mar 7, 1993 5:36 PM  
Subject: RE: FET  
To: Merlo, Ellen

Generally, I believe we have to approach the tax/health care battle much like we would if we were running a campaign against a long term incumbent. Out of the box, we are at a major disadvantage, i.e., we don't have incumbency and the concomitant credibility and prestige that follows and we don't have a built in communication vehicle to the electorate. As a result, we have to create all of these elements--and we have to do it now. We are also at a major disadvantage because we have multiple targets, i.e., the excise itself (state and local) and all of the social cost arguments and a public anxious enough to do just about anything to solve the health care crisis. I think we have to target all areas--which may require different strategies and tactics. Here are a couple of ideas, which I'll limit to dot points:

- Develop a credible anti-tax grass roots organization with a highly visible and credible executive director who can serve as spokesperson. Someone with the flavor and charisma of Ross Perot would be ideal. I mention him because I see television and infomercials as being a key communication vehicle in this battle. The key to this effort will be to stir up and mobilize the middle class' anti tax sentiment. My concern here is that the middle and lower classes have been lulled into complacency after the election and will be too accepting to sacrifice. It may be useful to survey the public on this issue to determine hot buttons and determine our vulnerable points on the tax and health care issues. The Times had an interesting piece about how far Americans are willing to go with health care reform today.

- Similarly, I think it would be worthwhile to develop a credible organization consisting of business interests that will be affected by the Clinton health care plan. The idea here is to have a counter voice to the administration's and pinpoint more prudent measures to health care reform and tax/spending decisions. It may be worthwhile to work with the Republicans here; I understand they are working on a separate program to reduce health care costs, the deficit.

- We should develop a program where we build upon the connections our RDs have with members. First thing we should do is allow them to identify key legislators/friends in Congress and then develop specific lobbying plans to address the industry's needs.

- We need to identify and retain the best minds on the tax and health care financing issues. While we do have good internal resources, we are competing against the best the Administration could find. We need to bring a few of our own in house to guide us through this maze. I'm sure Craig can ID some influential Bush people and we can find the academic types.

- We have to personalize the impact of the Administration's tax and health care programs. By this I mean we have to identify all of the constituent groups, whether they be middle to lower

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